

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 /101 W

----- 035430

R 270808Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2185

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERN 0867

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PORG US SZ

SUBJ: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: SWISS INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES

REF: STATE 37591

1. FOLLOWING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED IN STATE 37591
ARE KEYED TO THE LETTERED SUBPARAS IN PARA 7:

(A) ALTHOUGH SWITZERLAND IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE UN
OR THE IMF (BUT DOES HAVE OBSERVER STATUS WITH BOTH
ORGANIZATIONS) SWISS PARTICIPATE IN VIRTUALLY ALL UN
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND ARE ACTIVE MEMBERS OF OTHER
MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS OECD, GATT, IEA, ICAO.
SWITZERLAND MAY JOIN THE UN AND/OR THE IMF AT SOME FUTURE
TIME, BUT THERE IS NO PROSPECT OF IT DOING SO IN 1976.
BECAUSE OF THE COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC PROSPERITY IS SO DEPENDENT
ON INDUSTRIAL AND CAPITAL EXPORTS, SWISS FOREIGN POLICY,
BOTH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL, IS HEAVILY ORIENTED TOWARD
ECONOMIC ISSUES. SWITZERLAND'S BASIC INTERESTS AND
OBJECTIVES INCLUDE LIBERALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL
TRADE IN INDUSTRIAL GOODS; STABILIZATION OF EXCHANGE
RATES, PARTICULARLY OF THE SWISS FRANC; REDUCTION OF
RESTRICTIONS ON FREE FLOW OF CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT;
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AND ASSURING A CONSTANT SUPPLY OF RAW MATERIALS. AS A

SMALL, NEUTRAL COUNTRY, SWITZERLAND GENERALLY DOES NOT TAKE INITIATIVES IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, SWISS PREFER TO SUPPORT THE MAJORITY POSITION. WHEN THIS IS NOT FEASIBLE THEY MAY SUPPORT A MINORITY POSITION PUT FORWARD BY ONE OR MORE MAJOR COUNTRIES IF IT MORE CLOSELY REFLECTS SWISS INTERESTS. WITH SWISS OFFICIALS ALREADY PLAYING PROMINENT ROLES IN THE OECD (AMBASSADOR PAUL JOLLES) AND IAEA (DR CLAUDE ZANGGER), IT DOES NOT NOW SEEM LIKELY THAT GOS, WHICH IS SHORT-HANDED, WILL PUSH THE CANDIDACIES OF ANY MORE OFFICIALS FOR PARTICULAR POSITIONS IN MULTILATERAL BODIES.

(B) AS SWITZERLAND'S MULTILATERAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES OFTEN COINCIDE WITH THOSE OF THE US, THE SWISS FREQUENTLY FOLLOW US LEADERSHIP. AS A SUPPORTER OF THE CONCEPT OF CLOSER EUROPEAN COOPERATION, AND BECAUSE OF EXTENSIVE TRADE TIES WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, THE SWISS ARE ALSO INFLUENCED BY EC ATTITUDES. WHILE THE SWISS WILL ACTIVELY PROTECT THEIR OWN INTERESTS, THEIR ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE OTHER COUNTRIES IS USUALLY VERY LOW-KEYED.

(C) BECAUSE THE SWISS BUREAUCRACY IS SMALL, THE OFFICIALS IN BERN WHO FORMULATE POLICY OFTEN MAKE UP THE DELEGATIONS TO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS. THUS SWISS DELEGATIONS, PARTICULARLY WHEN THEY ARE HEADED BY AMBASSADOR PAUL JOLLES WHO IS THE SENIOR GOS ECONOMIC POLICY OFFICIAL, MAY HAVE CONSIDERABLE NEGOTIATING FLEXIBILITY. SWISS DELS, HOWEVER, ARE FULLY AWARE OF WHAT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL (EXECUTIVE) AND THE PARLIAMENT ARE LIKELY TO ACCEPT AND WILL NOT OVERSTEP THOSE LIMITS. IF POLICY-MAKING OFFICIALS ARE NOT ON THE SWISS DEL, INSTRUCTIONS FROM BERN ARE COMPLETE AND CONTROL IS EFFECTIVE.

(D) SWISS PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES AND HEADS OF DELEGATIONS TO MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE CAREER CIVIL SERVANTS AND HAVE NO INDEPENDENT POLITICAL POWER.

(C) THE GOS IS USUALLY RECEPTIVE TO US REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES, BECAUSE IT USUALLY VIEWS THOSE ISSUES IN MORE OR LESS THE SAME LIGHT AS WE. THE EMBASSY
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HAS A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH POLICY-MAKING OFFICIALS, AND, GIVEN THE MULTIPLICITY OF SHARED INTERESTS, CONSULTATIONS ON ONE MULTILATERAL ISSUE OR ANOTHER ARE AN ALMOST DAILY OCCURRENCE. IN MANY INSTANCES, SWISS POLICY ON A PARTICULAR ISSUE IS NOT FORMULATED UNTIL THE GOS KNOWS THE U S POSITION, BECAUSE IT CONSIDERS THAT POSITION (WHETHER IT APPROVES OF IT OR NOT) VERY IMPORTANT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BERN00867
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760075-0078
From: BERN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976027/aaaaafdp.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 37591
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <27 JUL 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: SWISS INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, US, SZ, XX
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006